

**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
OF THE TYNDALE CHORAL SOCIETY  
HELD AT 8.00PM ON WEDNESDAY, 22 NOVEMBER 2006,  
IN THE PARISH CENTRE, DURSLEY**

**1. Present:**

Ian Harrold (Musical Director); Lorna Lane (Treasurer); Julia O'Connor-Beach (Secretary); and

Catherine Bennett	John Hicks	Frances Neale	Val Skinner
Jill Brown	Jacquelin Hill	John Palmer	Wendy Thomas
Fiona Chandler	Diana Hobbs	Kathryn Palmer	Sandra Tucker
Mavis Church	Alastair Macleod	Lisa Randell	Geoff Whiley
Jenny Coles	Lynette Magnone	Kate Reeves	Elizabeth Young
Glenis Ewer	Derek Manning	Audrey Sewell	Andrew Young
Peter Harney	Doreen Manning	Dick Skinner	[30]
Apologies had been / were received from:			
Brian Bolsher	Clare Harrison	Tim Page	Alexandra Tomlinson
Phil Butcher	Marjorie Harrison	Angela Pendlebury	Lesley Townsend
Mike Chambers	Betty Hebditch	Indigo Redfern	Eve Tudgay
Jenni Culverwell	Wenna Hills	Hugh Richards	Ros Wakefield
Jean Dabinett	Estelle James	Wendy Richardson	Sue Walshaw
Kate Delaney	Brian Kitching	Helen Roberts	Vanessa Weaver
John Ewer	Sally Lamerton	Miriam Salman	Elaine White
Shelagh Fitzarthur	Caroline Marshall	Anne Shipton	Lesley Wrankmore
Anne Glanville	Marion Miller	Judith Taylor	
Christine Gourd	Brian Neale	Joyce Theaker	[38]

**2. Chairman**

Chairman John Ewer was unable to attend due to a sojourn in hospital. In his absence, Dick Skinner agreed to take the Chair. Dick expressed the Society's regret at John's absence, and asked Glenis to convey to John our very best wishes for a speedy recovery.

**3. Minutes of the last AGM**

**It was proposed** by Sandra Tucker and seconded by Audrey Sewell that the Minutes of the 2005 AGM be approved as a true record. All in favour.

**It was proposed** by Andrew Young and seconded by John Palmer that the Minutes of the General Meeting held on 3rd April 2006 be approved as a true record. All in favour.

**4. Matters Arising**

**4.1 Links to Schools**

In Anne Shipton's absence, the Secretary reported that Anne had written to local schools early in 2006, inviting students to join the choir on an apprenticeship basis. In spite of following up these initial contacts, Anne had received no response – either from staff or students. The Apprenticeship Scheme will still be available in 2007, and attempts will be made to promote it.

**5. Chairman's Report**

(John Ewer had provided a written report, read by Dick Skinner.)

"This year as Chairman was very unexpected as far as I was concerned; Anne Shipton had filled this role so well for so many years.

We have had, I believe, a very good year, which incorporated two very important innovations. The first was the gift of a web site, designed, produced and (even more importantly) kept up to date by John Hicks. It has enabled us to

raise funds from purchases at Amazon and other retailers, and has brought interest in the Society from outside singers. The second was the Brahms workshop, which was very successful both musically and socially. Great credit for the success of this venture rests with Julia and friends from within and without the Society, who worked so hard to raise awareness and to prepare a superb supper. It is enormously encouraging for the coming year.

We received funding this year from the National Lottery thanks to Audrey, Lorna and Julia, and thanks to Ian's efforts we have been promised £800 by the Elgar Society in support of the Winter concert for 2007. However, fund raising is still important for not only financial but also social reasons - we have so little time to meet and chat with each other on Monday nights, it is good to have the opportunity to meet at other events.

We have many unsung heroes among our membership who quietly contribute to the success of the society. In particular, we must thank Elizabeth Young and her helpers for running the 'bring and buy' table at every rehearsal, and Glenis who organises the rehearsal refreshments.

There are many individuals who have enabled events to run smoothly and we are grateful to those who baked cakes, washed up, served teas and suppers, erected staging, and looked after the 'front of house'.

In particular I must single out: your committee, which has dealt with the major organisation; Dick Skinner for his very professional production of newsletters and programmes; Ian, who has made rehearsals so enjoyable because of his detailed preparation, the music he has written and the learning CDs he has made; finally, what would we do without James? His ability to support the parts which are struggling, without making it obvious to the stronger sections, is brilliant, and the apparent ease with which he plays fast complex runs leaves me full of wonder.

This year, we lose Lynette (our Concert Secretary) and Sandra (in charge of Fund Raising) from our committee as they have completed their three year tour of duty. We thank them for all they have done.

Finally, some of us have a post-rehearsal refreshment at the 'Old Spot' and would be delighted if you would join us when we start again next year on March 26th."

## **6. Treasurer's Report**

The receipts and payments report to 21 November 2006 was distributed and the Treasurer commented as follows:

"Once again we have finished the year with a healthy surplus. The debtors figure refers to Amberley carol concert income and programme advertising money, both of which were received in 2006.

Members and Friends: For the whole year we had 62 members, with 5 joining us in the Autumn. Subscriptions at the normal rate realized £2,626. Of the 19 members who indicated in the membership survey last year that they wanted a substantial increase, 8 members paid an extra total of £130, bringing the figure to £2,756. Members were invited to pay at least £10 extra if they thought the subscription too low, or if they didn't wish/weren't able to join in any fund raising. Some members donated to actual fund raising events.

Fund Raising: We have 16 mugs to sell. Music hire of £113 is to be added, and income from this evening's event. The sale of Christmas cards has been disappointing. It would be very nice if members bought one or two packs each this evening!

Donations: Renishaw £250; Cam Parish Council £50; Dursley Town council £20 (this last being a small sum, but regularly received).

Tax Refund: With 53 members 'gift aiding' their subscription, the tax refund will probably settle down at something like £600 per year, although next year's claim will include approximately £204 from the Brahms workshop receipts.

Summer Concert: Ticket sales were rather disappointing after such a good turnout last year. The surplus was only £368 against a budget of £675.

Autumn Concert: Ticket sales of 152 again disappointing. Considering that the programme was a popular one, we budgeted for a sale of 200 tickets. However, with the Lottery funding of £1,300 the deficit was less than anticipated.

So, another successful year with a healthy bank balance. However, it is unlikely that we shall receive Lottery funding again, at least in the near future, and we shall be splitting any surplus on next year's workshop with St James' Church for their appeal - these were the main money-spinners this year. Elgar's King Olaf next Autumn will be an expensive concert and we need to raise money to fund this. £800 from the Elgar Society will be very welcome, but will not go far.

Again, I must say that we must really 'sell' the Society by being proud of our productions and selling as many tickets BEFORE the performance as we can, rather than accepting promises that 'we'll pay at the door'. This insures against people changing their minds if something else turns up later, or against bad weather. Having soloists costing at least £500 and orchestra at £3,000-£4,000 is a total waste if we perform to a half full Church! We must also recruit new members and make them feel welcome.

Subscriptions: I suggest that the annual subscription be increased by £1 (almost 2.5%) to £41 with effect from 1 January 2007, increasing to £42 on 7 May 2007. We have members for whom £41 represents a large sum; an extra £10 on the subscription would only realise £670, so we would still need to do fund raising even with this substantial raise. Any members with strong feelings about this proposed subscription level are invited to pay a larger amount, say, at least a further £10."

In response to Jacquelin Hill's query, the Treasurer explained that the 2005 tax refund was unusually high as it included backdated claims.

The Chairman thanked the Treasurer for her report and commented that it was good to have a healthy bank balance, which was needed to cover any poorly attended concert.

**It was proposed** by Andrew Young, seconded by Jacquelin Hill, that the basic annual members' subscription be raised for the coming year by £1 to £41 (penalty of an additional £1 for late payment after 7 May). Should any member feel unable (or prefer not) to be actively involved in fund raising efforts, s/he may opt to pay an additional sum to support the Society in its work (say, £10). The motion was carried by the majority, with one vote against. There were no abstentions.

## 7. Conductor's Report

"Like the so-called 'beautiful game', ours is a season of two halves. Sadly, no extra time this year at Amberley, but we did have some extra entertainment, rather like a streaker, with our Workshop Day in September.

The inimitable John Motson once said: "Nearly all the Brazilian supporters are wearing yellow shirts - it's a fabulous kaleidoscope of colour". Our Spring Concert, with its series of anthems for Gloucester Cathedral, could easily have been equally monochromatic, but with some splendidly sensitive singing, we were able to bring out many of the nuances the music needed. If not exactly a kaleidoscope, there were some expressive pastel shades. There were challenges, as John Sanders Mandatum Novum proved; in Motson's words: "That shot might not have been as good as it might have been". As so often in the past, we were indebted to Christopher Boodle for helping us out at short notice; I thought his macabre scherzo was a real winner.

Another Mottyism: "The goals made such a difference to the way this game went". The goal of bringing off a programme of three great elegiac pieces on Remembrance Day was one we rose to majestically. I think many of you were really moved by Elgar's 'For the Fallen'; I certainly was. The Handel Funeral Anthem may have been new to most of you, but it was delivered with an assurance that belied this, and shone through as the masterwork it is, despite the alien sound of clarinets. The highlight of the evening - of the season - was of course the Mozart Requiem. This year cannot have been short of performances, but I like to think ours had all the precision, the variety, and especially the drama that it needs. In the new Levin version, there are things to learn and things to learn anew, but whatever our personal views of the changes we brought the same commitment in performance as to the real Mozart. A good audience was there to appreciate our efforts.

The Choral Workshop day was an innovation I really enjoyed. I can't think what possessed me to choose the Brahms' Requiem as the main work, but I am glad I did. It was hard work for everyone, but very gratifying when it came off. The performance wasn't perfect - how could it be in the circumstances? - but I think it gave all those present a genuine sense of achievement. To my ears, the Parry was pretty good too. As well as the pleasure of meeting fellow-singers and promoting ourselves, there were even some funds raised at the end of it. Again we must thank Christopher Boodle, and above all Julia whose tireless efforts made the whole thing work, in preparation and on the day. We should be very proud of her.

So to next year, when we shall undertake the last of my initial 'pet projects' which started with 'Hiawatha': Elgar's 'King Olaf'. It is a work well suited to our resources, full of drama, singable ballads and a final climax even grander than 'For the Fallen'. In the Spring, we will undertake two masterworks: Vaughan Williams sublime Serenade to Music, and Michael Tippett's humanitarian Five Spirituals. Stanford's 'Phaudrig Crohoore' is not perhaps as great a work, but it has a sturdiness which has an appeal and is, above all, fun to sing. I hope you will all get behind it to give it your best shot - a goal worth scoring.

Let Mr. Motson have the final word: "It looks like a one man show here, although there are two men involved". Perhaps in a concert I seem like a one man show, but there are of course many more than two involved, all of whom

deserve my thanks: your Committee for their unstinting support, if I may single John and Julia out it is just that I have more dealings with them; Doreen, for handling all those copies so efficiently so that we always have stuff to sing; James, whose dextrous fingers often keep us going, but most of all you all who week by week and concert by concert make it all so worthwhile. And that's the final whistle from me for this year."

## **8. Election of Officers**

John Ewer, Lorna Lane and Julia O'Connor-Beach had agreed to continue in their posts.

The Nominations were therefore as follows:

Chairman	John Ewer
Hon. Treasurer	Lorna Lane
Hon. Secretary	Julia O'Connor-Beach

**It was proposed** by Elizabeth Young and seconded by Sandra Tucker that the above officers be elected to serve on the Committee for the year commencing 1 January 2007. The motion was carried unanimously.

## **9. Election of Committee Members**

The Nominations were as follows:

Concert Secretary	Lisa Randell
Publicity/Printing Secretary	Wendy Thomas
Fund Raising Secretary	Jill Brown

**It was proposed** by Frances Neale and seconded by Elizabeth Young that the above be elected to serve on the Committee commencing 1 January 2007. The motion was carried unanimously.

## **10. Music Focus Group**

It was reported (by the Secretary and Musical Director) that, following the discussion at the 2005 AGM and the open invitation to members to engage in the process of setting the concert programmes, Betty Hebditch and John Hicks had offered to serve on the MFG, joining the existing members. The MFG had met in July and worked through the list of suggestions from the members, and outlined a programme for the next 3 years, either from the list or prompted by the list. This suggested programme is subject to the approval of the committee, which bears the financial responsibility for the Society. On further scrutiny by the committee, it was considered that the 'Messa di Gloria' (Puccini), mooted for Summer 2007, would be better suited to a Winter concert (with orchestra and professional soloists). Ian gave the committee the choice of 6 substitute pieces, and it was felt that the Stanford 'Phauidrig Crohoore' would be suitable for a Summer performance.

John Hicks commented that the method by which the MFG came to its decisions should be addressed; i.e. a score and/or recording of any suggested work should be circulated before the MFG met, to ensure that informed decisions could be taken by its members.

It was the feeling of the meeting that the committee should create a process for the MFG, a framework to aid its members in their task of suggesting concert programmes.

## **11. Any Other Business**

### **11.1 Orchestra**

Jacquelin Hill reported that a friend, a retired music teacher, attended the concert, and was impressed that the orchestra was 'under control' and complemented the chorus. The Chairman said that the size of the orchestra (24), its proficiency, and the staging all contributed to this balance. Ian said that this was a direct result of employing professional players, who are able to judge their playing.

### 11.2 Interval Drinks

Lynette Magnone (retiring Concert Secretary) asked for the membership's opinion regarding the sale of interval drinks at the Winter concert, an innovation this year. It was felt that although a minority might feel it inappropriate, the majority appeared to have enjoyed the drinks (and mulled wine), and St James' Church itself offers wine at various events.

### 11.3 Library Charges

Doreen Manning (Librarian) explained that the cost of hiring library scores was now £10 for every 20 copies, and that members would therefore be asked to pay £2 per season for the hire of copies.

### 11.4 Friends

The Treasurer suggested an annual 'Friends' Package', to offer an invitation (non-transferable) to the two major concerts, reserved seating, interval drink, invitations to social events (subject to paying any charge), and newsletters, for a contribution of £25 (£40 for couples). This might prove an attractive Christmas present for friends or family, and be of real support to the Society. Frances Neale commented that the pricing should be carefully considered, so as not to offend existing Friends. Geoff Whiley suggested that the tax legislation should be checked, regarding Gift Aid/benefits included in the offer. There were no further comments forthcoming.

### 11.5 Repeating the Summer Concert

Sandra Tucker asked if the Summer Concert might be repeated, with Amberley Church in mind as a venue. The committee will consider this possibility.

### 11.6 Student Soloists

Jacquelin Hill asked if student soloists might be considered for the Summer concert. Ian Harrold replied that students might certainly be considered, although a high standard must be maintained and it was preferable if soloists were known to him.

### 11.7 Local Talent

Frances Neale asked if talented young instrumental musicians (sixth formers or music college students) from the locality might be found, who would do a free performance as experience in solo work; perhaps a small item in a mixed programme at a summer concert.

## 12. Close of Meeting

There being no further business, the meeting was declared closed at 9 pm.